1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

342 Rough ground-plans of three typical Hill Maria houses are given in the illustration on page 111. The Nugur house was the end house of a long-house, and faced south on to the main village street. It differs from the other two in having no partition wall between the veranda (*algi*) and the *angadi*, or women's kitchen and sleeping room; the *angadi* in this case is in fact almost a continuation of the veranda round the eastern side of the *lonu*. The husband actually slept in the veranda and his wife in the *angadi* in warm weather, but in the *lonu* in winter and rains. This house had no *kala* or menstruation room, because the village had a communal menstruation hut; so also the house had no back door.

Houses

The Kurmer house faced north on to the main street, and was the central house of a long-house of three houses; its western and eastern walls were thus only partitions separating it from the other two houses. It was itself almost two houses, as the widowed mother [592] of Dedha Keye, the occupant, had the eastern *algi*, *angadi* and *lonu* for her exclusive use; but there was no door between her portion of the *algi* and Keye's portion, only a partial continuation across the veranda of the partition wall between her and Keye's rooms. The widow was too old to need a *kala*, and so there was only one for Keye's wife in his part of the house, and this had a back door. Like the Nugur house, this house had no *agha* room.

The Handawada secular headman's (*peda's*) house was at the north end of a long-house containing three houses and facing west on to the village street; the other two houses had their verandas (*algi*) and entrances on the street side, facing west. His *algi* was therefore very small, and only nominally walled off from the open [351] ground to the north of the house by a bamboo wicker-work fence about 3½ feet high, being thus useless for keeping property. Where, as in the other houses illustrated, the veranda is in front of the house and parallel to the roof-tree, it is easy to construct a front wall as high as the roof, which is there barely 3½ feet above the ground.

342 513 784 The *agha* is the husband's living and sleeping room, and it is taboo (*polo*) for his wife, a mature daughter or any woman to sleep in it; but boys too small to sleep in the bachelors' dormitory and immature daughters may sleep there. In hot weather the males of the family often sleep under the granary, which is built on piles, and when houses have no *agha* this is the usual sleeping place at all times for the men of the family, and for male guests except when the latter can be accommodated in the village dormitory (*gotal-lon*). It is strictly taboo for any female to enter a granary, 342 513 or to sleep under one. Every *agha* has a large *alpanji* or sleeping

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

be distributed equally; no one boy must do more than another; no one may shirk, but no one may be unduly burdened.[1]

In the home, after marriage, quarrels usually arise about the distribution of work. This, rather than sexual jealousy, is the real cause of dispute in polygamous households. Where brothers live together, their wives quarrel about the serving of the food. To say *tokirsa* of a girl implies that 'she stares at other people eating' in a suggestive way; 'she peeps in from the door when other folk sit down for a meal, hoping to get some' but she will do no work herself. The real sting of the expression *jutaka*, 'eater of another's leavings', is that it suggests that the *jutaka* never works for himself, but goes cadging round ready to eat anything, even the scraps off dirty plates.

Men beat their wives for not cooking properly, but rarely for any other cause. Here again, the reason for a man's anger is not that he feels he has missed a good meal, but that he thinks his wife is not doing her fair share of work of the home. He himself has been out all day working in the fields; his wife has been enjoying herself at home, chatting with her gossips, wasting her time; otherwise she would certainly have cooked properly.

The actual records of these quarrels are instructive. At Jhakri I overheard a man quarrelling with his wife. 'Why didn't you make the rice soft, you *jutaka*?' he shouted. 'You haven't even yet learnt to cook. When you were a girl did you do nothing but dance at marriages?' To which his wife replied, 'Of course, all through my youth I sat still in the house, and my food was brought to me in bed. Ever since I married you, you have done all the work and I have just sat filling my belly. Come along, *mailotia*, turn me out of your house, you can get another cook, and I'll live somewhere else.'

At Palli, Shamrao Hivale was privileged to listen to a wife abusing her drunken husband for chronic idleness. It was an epic row, which went on and on, and of which every detail was so often repeated that it was easy to record.

> You can only live, screamed the woman, where there is a smell of liquor. That is your real home—the out-still—there is your bed and hearth; you have no home here. What will you do if I die? Who will feed you, who will look after the children? If you won't work, I will leave you and I will take away my children. You wander all day like a goat and all night like a thief. There is no salt in the house, there are no chillies; suppose the landlord comes and asks for some, or suppose a constable comes and wants food, what shall we do? If visitors come, what food can we give them? How are you going to pay the taxes? You shameless creature, a woman has sense but you have none. When there is work to be done, there is no life in you, but when you see liquor you are full of vigour. Then you are like a pig when it catches sight of excrement.
>
> You child of a Ghasnin's vagina, go and wash your dirty face and eyes; go and see how other people work. If I had known what you were like, I would never have come to your house, you corpse. When there is work to be done in the house, then your back begins to ache, your penis is sore. Look, your son is ill, but you won't go to the Siraha—

[1] The Santal also insist on the exact division of food at festivals—P. O. Bodding, *Studies in Santal Medicine* (Calcutta, 1925), p. 78—and I have noticed it also among the Orissa tribes. So keen are the Savara on the precise allocation of labour that when I have required porters to shift camp, every man in the village has turned up—many more than necessary—to ensure that no one does more, or less, work than anyone else.